

COMMERCIAL USER'S GUIDE TO THE INTERNET

NEW S L E T T E R

Volume 1, No. 1

November 1994

Mosaic Wars:

Vendors Scramble for High-Stakes Growth Market

The phenomenal popularity of Mosaic, a software tool for traversing the multimedia threads of the World Wide Web, has created a whole new segment of the software market. The first generation of Mosaic vendors is rushing to carve out market share, even by giving away some of their software.

Vendors are engaging in sharp price competition, thereby either growing the market for their version of Mosaic or creating the standards that will help grow the Mosaic market overall. Because of low startup costs and considerable opportunities, new software vendors are swarming into this field. Here's a look at several organizations that are meeting the demand for commercial Mosaic.

MCC: Free Clients, Costly Servers

For starters, Mosaic Communications Corp. (MCC—not to be confused with the Austin, Texas-based MCC, Microelectronics and Computer Technology Corporation, operators of EInet and creators of the WinWeb and MacWeb freeware packages), a privately held Internet software startup, will be giving away one of its strategic products, at least for the time being.

MCC began making the beta for Mosaic Netscape available via several FTP sites October 13. MCC, founded by Jim Clark (the creator of Silicon Graphics) and Marc Andreessen (creator of NCSA Mosaic), will also make the shipping version of the soft-

(Continued on page 2)

What's Inside

Calendar of upcoming events
2

Interview: Joel Maloff talks about changes ahead in Internet access market
4

IndustryNet is current host of MecklerWeb's Manufacturing domain
6

Reader Q&A forum
7

Analysis:

MecklerWeb Launched But Changes Course

Announced at the Internet World tradeshow in June, MecklerWeb quietly went live on Oct. 5. Brainchild of Christopher Locke—founder of MecklerWeb Corp. and evangelist for commerce on the Internet—MecklerWeb was to provide an “audience concentrator,” Locke says, a dynamic center for businesses that wanted to establish a presence on the Internet.

On October 17 Mecklermedia Corp.—MecklerWeb's parent company, a magazine publisher (CD-ROM World, Virtual Reality World, and Internet World) and tradeshow organizer—officially announced its “deci-

sion to reconstitute MecklerWeb.” While Locke proposed a “horizontal” organization of companies by broad subject area, or “domain,” such as Arts & Entertainment, Computers, and Manufacturing, the reconstituted MecklerWeb, says publisher Alan Meckler, will be organized by much more focused vertical markets, as defined by the content and advertisers of Meckler's magazines.

In the circumstances, a reconstituted MecklerWeb will remain within Mecklermedia, while Locke will probably

(Continued on page 6)

Upcoming ...

December Update:

- ✓ Glossary for the Guide
- ✓ Index for the Guide
- ✓ Additional resource listings

Calendar

- 2nd ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security. Nov. 2-4, 1994, Fairfax, Va. Contact: Susan Quirk, George Mason University, (703) 993-2090.
- Gigabit Networks: Key to the Information Superhighway. Nov. 10-11, 1994. Clemson, S.C. Contact: Wendy Winn, wwendy@eng.clemson.edu.
- Fall '94 Comdex. November 14-18, 1994. Las Vegas, Nevada. Information: <http://www.comdex.com:8000/>. Sponsored by the Interface Group (617) 449-6600.
- Exploring the Internet: New Resources for Strengthening Business. Nov. 14-15, 1994. Burlington, Vt. Information: (802) 656-2088 or (802) 639-3188; conference.registration@uvm.edu.
- Computer Security Conference and Exhibition. Nov. 14-16, 1994. Washington, D.C. Contact: (415) 905-2626.

- Smart Valley Telecommuting Project. Nov. 15-16, 1994. Contact: Leslie Kareckas, (415) 843-2103, Lesliek@svi.org.
- Email World Conference and Exposition. Nov. 29-Dec. 1, 1994. Boston. Contact DCI: (508) 470-3880. Online registration at <http://www.oec.com/EMAILWORLD/page28.html>.
- Libraries and the National Information Highway. Dec. 5-6, 1994. Silver Spring, Md. (202) 331-5771.
- 18th International Online Information Meeting. London, England. Dec. 6-8, 1994. Information: <http://info.learned.co.uk>; conferences@learned.co.uk.
- 1995 RSA Data Security Conference. Jan. 9-11, 1995. Redwood Shores, Calif. Contact (415) 595-8782 (Kurt Stammberger). ◆

Mosaic . . .

(Continued from page 1)

ware available free for downloading when it is available, probably in November. (The National Center for Supercomputing Applications, NCSA, developed the original Mosaic. See "Mosaic at a Glance.")

MCC, based in Mountain View, Calif., claims for Netscape a ten-fold performance improvement over NCSA Mosaic and "continuous document streaming," which makes Web pages available before every linked element has downloaded. Both features tackle the performance deficits of NCSA Mosaic. MCC also offers encryption and server authentication, features also lacking in its NCSA predecessor.

MCC has not reverted to a freeware model of software distribution, however. The client software will be free, but only for noncommercial use. Commercial users will pay \$99, which includes a 90-day warranty and customer support; users of the free product will not receive support. In addition, MCC's two server products, Mosaic Netsite Communications Server (for making information available) and Mosaic Netsite Commerce Server (for conducting secure transactions), will carry prices of \$1,495 and \$5,000 and will ship in October and November, respectively. For more information, see MCC's home page at <http://www.mcom.com> or call 1-800-NETSITE.

CommerceNet Sets the Standards

Also free will be CommerceNet's forthcoming World Wide Web client and server software, Secure Mosaic and Secure HTTPD, currently in beta and scheduled for

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President: Richard E. Thompson

Vice President/Publisher: Lucy Caldwell-Stair

Senior Publications Director: Darla Fera

Editor: David Peal

Senior Marketing Manager: Cheryl Nelson-Madden

Production Manager: Linh DePledge

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release in the fourth quarter. CommerceNet is not a vendor, or even a "mall," as it is sometimes characterized, but a consortium of mostly large companies that seeks to develop the standards that will facilitate electronic commerce on the Internet.

CommerceNet's Secure software is based on publicly available specifications for encryption and authentication features developed by Enterprise Integration Technologies (EIT), a member of the CommerceNet consortium. These security features will ensure the confidentiality of direct credit-card transactions on the Internet, thus promoting the commercial infrastructure of the Internet, an important part of CommerceNet's mandate. CommerceNet's implementation of Secure Mosaic and HTTPD will probably be returned to the NCSA when they are completed, free for public distribution. Broad distribution will create the standards required for electronic commerce, CommerceNet believes.

Close to CommerceNet is Terisa Systems, a joint venture of an EIT spinoff and RSA Data Security Inc., which is now offering a security toolkit to enable developers to add security features to client and server Web software, and eventually to other Internet software as well. The \$3,000 toolkit will be available in the fourth quarter.

The Internet in a Large Box

On October 12 another much-publicized vendor, Seattle-based Spry, Inc., made available a free upgrade to its Mosaic Express product, the first released commercial implementation of Mosaic, for which the

company claims speed, stability, availability on several platforms, including OS/2, and support of multiple security standards, including DES and RSA. Unlike MCC, Spry offers an entire set of Internet tools, of which Mosaic is just one piece. In this regard Spry is comparable to NetManage, a San Jose, Calif. tools vendor (that still lacks a Mosaic client, however).

Spry's basic Mosaic product is available in several configurations: alone, Mosaic Express sells for a low \$29.95; as part of the *Internet in a Box* package, jointly marketed with publisher O'Reilly and Assoc., Mosaic is available with other tools (such as mail, FTP, and News); and finally Mosaic is part of the AIR package, targeted at the corporate LAN market and priced at \$199 to \$449 depending on the range of tools included.

For now all these packages are targeted at users. Spry has not announced a Web server product, but such an offering is probable in 1995. The products are available direct, through software retail channels, and in bookstore chains such as Barnes & Noble.

A demo of the core Mosaic Express product is available free from Spry's Web page (<http://www.spry.com>); the demo can be converted into the full working product and paid for online, via a secure credit-card transaction.

A major question for users to ask with all these new products (and many more are under development but less imminent) is: will all clients and servers work with each other? Will the openness that fueled the growth of the Web survive the commercialization of Mosaic, its most important tool? For some guidance in choosing a Mosaic vendor, see Figure 313A of your *Guide*. ♦

Mosaic At a Glance

Mosaic was created in 1992-93 by the National Center for Supercomputer Applications (NCSA) at the University of Illinois in Champaign, and quickly gained the reputation in 1993 as the "killer app" of the Internet. Available for Windows, the Macintosh, and X Window, Mosaic is software that lets users browse the World Wide Web, an international collection of multimedia "pages" linked to each other and to text, graphics, audio, and video files *anywhere*. The Mosaic team at NCSA wanted to make the Web more accessible to nontechnical users. Mosaic is just the most popular of several Web browsers. Cello and WinWeb are other popular freeware graphical browsers—they let users see

graphics on the screen—while Lynx is a popular character-based browser. Although perhaps 2 million copies of NCSA Mosaic have been downloaded, experts doubt that more than half a million people actually use Mosaic. It requires a serial-line connection (SLIP or PPP), which can be difficult to configure, plus a fast modem (at least 14.4 kbps). In addition to Mosaic's performance problems, business users have been reluctant to take orders via Mosaic because of its lack of security features, such as the ability to encrypt messages and to authenticate the identity of a customer. Currently, NCSA Mosaic is being licensed to commercial vendors by Spyglass Inc. (<http://www.spyglass.com>). ♦

Turbulence, Shakeouts, Opportunity Expected in Access Market As Internet Passes to Private Sector

Joel Maloff, author of Internet as a Strategic Business Tool (forthcoming from O'Reilly and Assoc.), former Executive Director of CICNet and Vice President - Client Services, Advanced Network and Services, and a contributor to the Guide, has 20 years of telecommunications experience. He was at the center of things when the current-day Internet came together in the late 1980s, and he currently helps businesses understand and take advantage of the Internet. He shares his views on the changes remaking the Internet access market with the Guide.

Guide: Under the National Science Foundation (NSF) the Internet backbone was barred to commercial use by the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). The parallel network created by the access providers organized in the Commercial Internet Exchange (CIX) since 1991 has made it easier for companies to do business on the Internet. Does the AUP still matter today? Whose policy, and what does it restrict these days?

Maloff: Today the AUP issue is mostly moot. It still may be an issue for some of the regional research and education networks that receive funding from the government (such as SURAnet), although they, too, have been able to separate "acceptable" and "unacceptable" uses and to charge fair market prices for services.

Most commercial providers—Performance Systems International (PSI), Altnet, ANS, Netcom, Sprint, CompuServe, etc.—are interconnected at several sites, thus permitting the free flow of communications amongst competing carriers. The only remaining practical use restrictions that many of these carriers have in place pertain to "legal" issues. You are explicitly warned that conducting actions deemed illegal by your service provider is grounds for being disconnected. Also, most providers have a prohibition on "broadcast advertising," meaning you cannot blanket the Internet with unsolicited messages.

Given the network architecture of the Internet, this is in everyone's best interest, including, perhaps, the potential perpetrators. The Internet is not a mass market, but hundreds of "micro-markets." The best advice I can give to new business users is to target the markets that are of specific interest to you, and immerse yourself in them—learn about them, learn what is "acceptable" to them—rather than trying to blanket the entire Internet.

As the Internet continues its remarkable evolution and more companies become access providers, the issue of acceptable use will fade into the background. The key

for business today is to ask these questions of prospective Internet access providers:

First, do you have an AUP in effect today and what does it prohibit?

Second, do you have full connectivity to all other commercial Internet providers today? If not, which providers can you reach? Given that the Internet is in fact a web of interconnected TCP/IP-based service providers, you may be able to reach most of them, but not others that specifically choose to bar your traffic.

For example, a company that sets up a firewall to keep unwanted visitors out of their internal facilities is technically part of the Internet but unreachable. If the Commercial Internet Exchange (CIX)—the organization of providers of commercial traffic—ever implements its threatened filtering, they too would be limiting types of traffic.

Lastly, how many points of interconnection do you have with other Internet access providers? One point of interconnection creates a "single point of failure" and makes your services vulnerable to inevitable outages. The greater the number of "meet points," the more robust your prospective provider's network will be. Again, given that each Internet access provider is only one small part of the overall "cloud," the greater the number of interconnection points with other "partners in the cloud," the better. By having multiple connections to different providers at different locations, the service providers increase the "survivability" of their networks, and thus they enhance the quality of service to their customers.

In short, ask questions of your providers, but do not be concerned about traversing an AUP minefield. The mines have, for the most part, already been defused.

Guide: The framework of commercial and midlevel providers is an artifact of the late 1980s, when the government was funding the Internet. Now that the government is withdrawing from its direct role in the Internet, what will be the fate of the Internet's research-and-education mainstay, the midlevel providers?

Maloff: As the direct funding of the so-called regional or midlevel research and education networks by the NSF comes to an end, there will be many changes in the Internet access provider industry.

Does this mean that the "midlevels" (like SURAnet, CICNet, PREPnet, or Midnet) will simply go away? The answer is certainly not. These organizations were

founded to provide a much needed service to students, faculty, research and staff at major education facilities, and to provide access to university resources for corporate researchers. This need still exists, and it is likely that some of the midlevels will refocus on this mission rather than attempt to compete with major national or international Internet access companies.

We should also expect to see the food chain in full operation. Many of the midlevels will consider acquisition or merger. Already, we have seen BARRnet acquired by BBN [Bolt Beranek & Newman]/NEARnet and Midnet acquired by Global Internet Services (GIS). Most of the larger, more successful midlevels are also considered acquisition targets. If they are acquired by businesses that are driven more by profit than by education and benevolence, we may find their earlier mission somewhat compromised and other university-based organizations may fill the void.

It is important to remember that the midlevels served a broader role for their constituents than simply providing Internet connectivity. Programs like CICNet's Rural Datafication Program or NYSERNET's efforts in the K-12 arena have been quite important and could be lost in the rush for Internet profits. This view of the future anticipates a separation of Internet connectivity and related services from the proliferation and evangelization of Internet uses. As long as the two components remain in synchronization with one another, they will work well together.

Guide: With CompuServe and America Online promising a dramatic expansion of their Internet services, including SLIP/PPP and consulting services, what is the outlook for commercial providers such as PSI and Netcom?

Maloff: Existing commercial providers—such as PSI, UUNet Technologies (Alternet), Netcom, and ANS—will find the competition increasingly challenging. Given the likelihood of the U.S. Internet access marketplace exceeding \$1 billion in value by 1996, we will see a flurry of well-funded substantial organizations getting into this business. Probable "name" players that could enter the U.S. Internet access marketplace by 1995 include: CompuServe (already announced for November 1994 availability), America Online, Prodigy, General Electric's GENie, MCI, AT&T (already announced but showing little aggressiveness), Cable & Wireless, LDDS/Wiltel, Southwest Bell, Ameritech (already announced), Pacific Bell, NYNEX, Bell Atlantic, Bell South, US West, Metropolitan Fiber Systems, Teleport, most large cable TV systems, and perhaps even Microsoft (building on its Marvel project).

Sprint is already a major Internet competitor, and Delphi is making moves that could bring it a significant share of the market. The addition of Alan Baratz, former IBM executive, as Delphi President may make Delphi a more serious player.

In addition, there are hundreds of smaller Internet access providers springing up around the U.S. and throughout the world. Some will succeed in carving out a geographic or specialized industry niche; others will succeed in building up a sufficient level of business until they are recognized and consumed by larger fish on the food chain; and some will be the victims of the inevitable shake-out that will occur.

Of the top five Internet access providers in the U.S. (by percent of market share)—PSI, UUNet, Sprint, Netcom, and ANS—it is quite possible that only Sprint will remain in its present form by 1996. All of the others can be considered potential candidates for merger or acquisition.

In fact, of the top five Internet access providers in the U.S. (by percent of market share)—PSI, UUNet, Sprint, Netcom, and ANS—it is quite possible that only Sprint will remain in its present form by 1996. All of the others can be considered potential candidates for merger or acquisition.

Guide: With the access market in such flux, where do you see the market for ancillary Internet services? Where do the opportunities lie for companies serving commercial expansion?

Maloff: Once we look beyond Internet access services, the Internet is an entrepreneur's dream. Many services will be required for the Internet to continue to grow and prosper. These include new online information sources (similar to those already provided by Dialog, Mead Data Central, West Publishing, Legi-Slate, and many others), electronic storefronts for retail sales and marketing (instead of hosting your own Internet server), security planning and implementation tools, Internet monitoring services, education and training programs, research and analysis reporting, and consultation services.

As the Internet expands out of the traditional high-tech user community and begins to include users requiring support and assistance, the marketplace for quality Internet services will explode. It is already beginning to happen. Organizations like MecklerWeb [see page 1], CommerceNet, Enterprise

(Continued on page 8)

MecklerWeb . . .

(Continued from page 1)

pursue his goals through a different vehicle. What's behind this struggle for the soul of MecklerWeb?

Price Not Right

Immediately behind the decision lay disappointment with a higher MecklerWeb budget and fewer paid-up participants than Mecklermedia was counting on, says Meckler. At the same time, Meckler believes, participation in the MecklerWeb carried too high a price—or was perceived as too expensive. Sponsors with a Web server of their own were to pay at least \$25,000, while Web service providers are today creating pages for a few hundred or thousand dollars—albeit without the audience concentration or publicity Locke was promising. Of the 250 or so companies that have expressed interest in MecklerWeb, Meckler says, only a handful have invested time or money in the enterprise.

In his proposed revamping of MecklerWeb, Meckler will be offering lower-priced services—as low as \$3,000 for 90 days—to existing Meckler customers and advertisers, as well as to other publishers. Instead of a special sales staff, the tradeshow and magazine sales staff will be offering clients the additional service of a “MecklerWeb” presence.

Meckler and Locke disagree on content as well as on the organization and pricing of content. Locke encourages information-intensive, two-way marketing that is sensitive to the Net culture. Meckler is more willing to put up any Web page a client wants, whether it is tailored to the traditional Internet culture or is overtly commercial and geared to broadcast media.

MecklerWeb as Mall

Other developments have not helped the image of Locke's MecklerWeb. In the months since MecklerWeb was announced, collections of online businesses have cropped up across the Internet. These business sites are called, sometimes disparagingly, “malls,” and a debate rages on the Internet about the value to customers of mall-like collections of businesses. Proliferation of malls has both driven down the price of Web presence and elicited criticism of the very concept of “mall.”

Rob Raisch, who runs the Internet Company in Cambridge, Mass., supplier of value-added Internet services to business, is skeptical of the online mall concept. Online malls today are a “random, haphazard collection” of companies, he says. “What is it about an online mall that might attract people?” he wants to know. Even if one were to create a “supermall” incorporating stores from all the other malls, says Raisch, someone else could create another one tomorrow. On the other hand, Raisch argues, if there were a comprehensive directory tool that would allow users to ask the Internet to find everything about specific topics, “suddenly the mall loses its efficacy.”

Locke dissociates himself from the concept of malls but also doubts that directory services are imminent. “Don't hold your breath,” waiting for an intelligent agent like that, commented Locke. “If it happens, it's not going to happen soon enough.”

Alan Meckler will be adhering to the mall concept—in the sense of a collection of businesses in a single online space—and is counting on the popularity of his magazines and tradeshow to generate interest, foot traffic, and revenue. The Internet is probably big enough for Locke and Meckler. ♦

IndustryNet Joins MecklerWeb

MecklerWeb's—Meckler's or Locke's—best chance at success may lie in bringing together services such as IndustryNet, a subsidiary of privately held Automation News Network (ANN) and host for now of the Manufacturing domain.

IndustryNet is a clearinghouse of information about manufacturing and engineering suppliers, of whom currently more than 150 are online—companies such as Allen Bradley, Honeywell, Perkin-Elmer, and Schlumberger. Users can read about vendors and products and solicit bids from suppliers. Manufacturers are organized by type of product and region, as well as alphabetically. Members (and

membership is free and unrestricted) can scan advertisements for used industrial equipment and keep up to date with industry news by sector and region. IndustryNet also brings its members megabytes of business shareware—everything from accounting programs to neural network software—as well as classified job ads and information about the ANN Continuing Education Seminars. Long a trainer, publisher of regional industry reports, and supplier of print industry directories, ANN will publicize its Net presence through existing channels, and wants to be positioned for the day when electronic commerce—actual buying and selling—becomes feasible. ♦

Help Desk*

by Kevin Savetz

Q I am a new user to the Internet. I found a newsgroup called **rec.music.marketplace**. I noticed that other people are listing personal items for sale, as well as commercial advertisements. I have a product that I would like to offer online. Can I announce my product, or should I play it safe and keep quiet? I don't want to violate my service provider's Terms of Agreement.

A The answer depends entirely on the newsgroup to which you wish to post and your terms of agreement with your service provider. Let's first look at the newsgroups themselves.

The inhabitants of some newsgroups allow—or at least tolerate—personal or commercial advertising within their hallowed halls. A little common sense will tell you whether a newsgroup is the right place to post an ad of any type: **rec.music.marketplace** and **misc.forsale.computers.mac** (groups devoted to advertising) are certainly safer places to post than **rec.music.reviews** or **comp.sys.mac.comm** (groups devoted to discussion).

What you officially can and can't post depends on the "charter" (posted rules) of each newsgroup. However, what you can get away with on USENET and what your service provider allows may be two separate things.

I called your service provider and a spokesperson from their support staff said that service "does not allow its users to make posts that are against the charter of a newsgroup. Commercial postings are often specifically disallowed in the charter of newsgroups." (Notable exceptions are the biz news hierarchy, which is specifically for doing business, and the alt hierarchy, whose loosely knit groups are frequently without official charters.)

In the words of the support staff spokesperson, "in the case of the marketplace and for-sale groups, what is allowed and what isn't allowed can be a bit of a gray area. The fact that semi-commercial advertising is tolerated in these areas can mislead a user into thinking it's okay to advertise their business there. It isn't." So, a

posting that says "I cleaned out my closet this weekend and found a lot of old compact discs. I'm selling the following titles for \$10 apiece or best offer" would be just fine on **rec.music.marketplace**, but a posting that said, "BigNameBrands Discount Record House announces its Fall Clearance Sale! 10% off record-store prices! E-mail for a free catalog" would be a mistake.

The difference is that the former is a single unofficial personal sale by an individual. The latter is a business advertising its goods/services. (But even if you post an ad to a place where that's not kosher, the worst that can happen is you'll receive a few hundred flames from irked cohabitants of the Internet; you must ask what your goal is, what your company's image is, and whether flaming is necessarily a bad thing for your company!)

Your provider gets hundreds of complaints each day about the posts its users make. If a complaint is legitimate, the provider's policy is to ask the user to cancel the article—otherwise, the provider will temporarily suspend the account, a more drastic measure.

After three abuses, a user will probably never get his account back. By the way, my mole at your provider told me that many of the complaints they received are not about legitimate abuses, but merely someone trying to get an enemy in trouble!

Q Just how many businesses are selling their wares on the Internet? Is the practice of selling on the Net really growing as fast as everyone says?

A One way to measure commercial expansion on the Internet is to look at one key index. The latest edition of the Internet Mall, a listing of businesses advertising on the Net, lists 325 shops hawking their products and services online—everything from flowers to books to erotic toys.

The list is growing at the rate of two shops each day. To receive the Internet Mall, send e-mail to **taylor@netcom.com** with the words **send mall** in the Subject: line. Leave the message body blank.

[Editor's note: The Internet Mall, by the way, includes only companies whose "customers must be able to order through the Net directly," thus excluding the many companies not using online transactions. The moral of this story is that with 20,000-plus registered commercial domains, there is much more to the Net than hawking products and services; smart companies are quietly running their business using Internet e-mail, Web-based documentation, file transfer via FTP, conference calls via MUDs, and Internet-enabled customer service.] ◆

*The Help Desk is a regular feature of the newsletter. Questions are answered by Kevin Savetz, a contributing editor to the Guide and author of *Your Internet Consultant* (SAMS, 1994). You can submit questions to David Peal, Editor, at: (202) 739-9541; or e-mail: **dpeal@ix.netcom.com**.

Maloff . . .

(Continued from page 6)

Integration Technologies, NetManage, Spry, Security Dynamics, and my own company are recognizing and filling market opportunities.

Guide: With all these changes, should a business new to the Net wait and see how things shake out? If new access choices are in the offing, should new business users postpone the choice of an access method and a provider?

Maloff: A typical business person could become intimidated quite easily and choose to "sit this one out" while waiting for the industry to calm down. That could potentially be a serious mistake. Those organizations that recognize the Internet for the strategic business tool that it can be will have an edge on their competitors. But as with anything, before you invest in the Internet as a business tool, invest the time to determine what it is that you wish to accomplish. This includes simple access, development of services to be marketed over the Internet, and Internet security planning.

By knowing your desired objectives, you will then be able to select appropriate providers of those services. For large procurements, I always recommend a Request for Proposal. It makes you put down clearly what you want and forces the vendors to respond in a common format. Decisions are much more scientific and normally more readily apparent.

If you have done some simple preparation before implementing Internet services, you need not be concerned about the rapid changes in the marketplace. If your service provider is sufficient to meet your needs now but subsequently gets acquired, your services should retain their level of quality. If you are unhappy with your service providers, there will be many alternatives to choose from.

The alternative is to wait for a calming period that may be many years away. This could be more costly than jumping in and finding your level of comfort.

Guide: Does the diminished direct role of the government mean a decline of standards or lowering of service, that is, does the waning role of the NSF have an impact on business users apart from the declining importance of the AUP?

Maloff: The diminishing role of the NSF in the Internet will not have a negative impact on the business community. Rather, the NSF will continue to invest its funds in new areas of interest and act as an incubator for approaches that may benefit business years from now.

The Internet has grown into a robust, vibrant community over the past few years and is becoming increasingly conducive to a broad range of business purposes. This robustness has created an open, interconnected "enhanced information utility," and the days of widely restrictive usage policies and difficult access are largely in the past. If the Internet lives up to its potential, we will be using it for group communications, information access and electronic access well into the next century. ♦

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